



Western Division

Train Collectors Association

Newsletter



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“Special Membership Drive Edition”

March, 2004



President's Message

*By Robert Caplan,
President, TCA Western Division*

Our next meet will take place on **Saturday, March 27** in the Arcadia Senior Center, located at 405 S. Santa Anita Avenue in Arcadia, CA. Sellers: *tables are free!*

To get to the meeting, exit the 210 Freeway at Santa Anita Ave. drive south about half a mile and turn right into the parking lot. We're located next to the lawn bowling area. Doors open at 10 am. Our membership meeting begins earlier now at 11:30 a.m. Please check our newly updated website, at <http://www.tcawestern.org>, for more information and a detailed map!

Because we celebrate “St. Patrick's Day” in March our Display Theme will be **GREEN!** So bring that **Green** Train or train related item or a train that will make us **Green** with envy. I have some very interesting **Green** Trains to share too! As usual, there will be a prize for the most interesting **green** display!

We want more TCA members to join in on our monthly train meets. In an effort to accomplish this, we are implementing several new programs designed to get members over to the Arcadia Senior Center on the fourth Saturday of the month.

First, starting this April, we will begin selling ‘Special Raffle Tickets’ for the NEW 2004 Lionel Pioneer Zephyr Set. This beautiful set includes the locomotive, RPO baggage, coach car, and observation car, TrainMaster Command, Odyssey System, maintenance free motors, fan driven smoke and much more. Tickets are \$20 each and only a total of 100 tickets will be sold.



At the Western Division April meet, and at each subsequent meet, one ticket will be pulled from all tickets sold. That lucky ticket holder will get a nice crisp ONE HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL (\$100). However, you must be present to win the \$100! The winning ticket will then be placed back with the other tickets, for the regular Zephyr raffle. Think about it. Your ticket could be pulled out each remaining meet for the rest of the year. That's a possible \$800. And your lucky ticket could also win the Lionel Zephyr set too! The set will be awarded during our December Holiday meet.



Because this is our “50th Anniversary Celebration”, we have commissioned 150 Special Hobo TCA Western Division 50th Anniversary figures to be given away at each Train Meet starting in April. First come, first served until they are all gone. These unique limited edition figures will be a



Memorable Keepsake for all who get one. Remember the only way to get one is to be at our meet. Sorry, only one Hobo Figure for each TCA Western Division Member.

During our April, July, September, and November meets we have a Special Door Prize! For each of these Western Division Meets we are giving away, as a Door Prize, one of our Western Pacific 1954-2003 RED Banquet Box Cars. These cars are very sought after (and when offered) sell for up to \$500. Come to a meet and you could be the “Lucky Winner”!

Membership, Membership!!!! As part of our “Western Division Membership Drive” for 2004 we are promoting a “Membership Contest”. The member that recruits the most people to become new members of our division during the year will be awarded a RED Western Division Banquet Car. Just bring in the most new members, to our GREAT Western Division, and the Car IS Yours!!

We hope all these new programs will make TCA Western Division train meets the one event you won't want to miss! Come on out each and every month!

—Bob Caplan

Western Division February Meet Recap

By Steve Waller, TCA Western Div. Recording Secretary

Things were really hopping, with lots of trains for sale on the trading tables. President Bob Caplan presided over the Membership Meeting. Many of the topics he covered are reviewed in the President's Message on page one of this letter.



Carrie's Kitchen had its grand opening. Dennis Taube's daughter, Carrie Podliska, served as master chef. There was a varied and delicious assortment of food. The menu included meatball sandwiches, hot dogs, muffins, doughnuts, coffee and soda. Carrie was ably assisted by her husband Scott, and her sons Garrett (age 4) and Nick (age 2). After a short hiatus in March, for Norcal, Carrie will be back at our meets regularly with good food to eat.

Bob Caplan has graciously offered to bring FREE doughnuts, popcorn, and coffee on March 27th.

We're looking for volunteers to help with the TCA-National 50th Anniversary Photo Album. We need to fill four photo album pages with photos and memorabilia from the TCA Western Division. What do you have to share of an historical nature? Our deadline is May 15th, 2004. The album will be on display in June at the TCA 50th Anniversary National Convention in Pittsburgh, PA. and then placed in our National Museum in Strasburg, PA. Be sure to attend!



The February display theme was 'Valentine's and President's Day'. Wayne Sheriff brought his set of the Lionel Presidential observation cars (Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower). Bob Caplan shared his rare George H. Bush observation, one of just 50 made. The car was

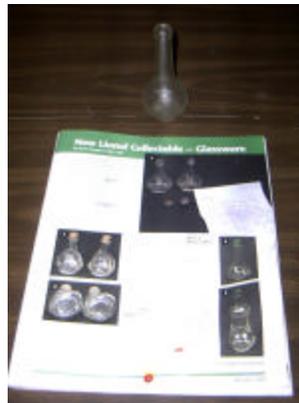
only available with a \$5,000 donation to the 1987 Bush campaign. (They're worth even more now!).

Bob also displayed a rare glassware piece, a salad oil cruet from the Lionel Executive Dining Room, circa 1950. It may even have been handled by Joshua L. Cowan himself!

Ernie Renn shared his McCoy "Chief Jeremy" TPC Circus standard gauge steamer in red.

Bob Trimble told a heart-warming story about his a 20 Mule Team donkey train model. The winner of the display this month was Bob Spellmire, who brought a wide-gauge American Flyer President's Special in tan.

In addition to Mr. Spellmire, other winners of a new Lionel Tank Car were Bill Clausen and 11-year old Michelle Abbe, who looked fit-as-a-fiddle after her recent surgery in January.



Ernie's Red 'Chief Jeremy'

Immediate Past President Russ Lange was awarded a plaque in appreciation for his service from 2001 through 2003, and for the work he did on the TCA National Convention.

We ended the February meet with an incredible auction, that featured items from the collection of the late John Thousand. We also paused to remember our late Western Division members Bob Wall and Wayne Singer.



TCA members

Russ Lange and Wayne Sheriff were interviewed in an article about toy trains that appeared in the Los Angeles Times on February 18, 2004. Thanks goes to Harold Shapiro and his beautifully updated TCA Western Division website, which directed the Times reporter to our members. If you haven't seen the website lately (and all the Convention photos there), check it out at www.tcawestern.org.

On February 28th and 29th, TCA Western Division had a



booth at the Pomona Fairplex Model Train Expo. Manning our table was, at various times, Harold & Cheryl Shapiro, Wayne & Cynthia Sheriff, Dennis Taube and Bob Caplan. Plus, Richard Keppel brought a

multitude of trains and created his unique operating display.

There were several different gauges of trains running all at once on the unique floor-level layout, controlled by the MTH Digital Command System. Shown are helpers Steven Johnson and Christopher Keppel. Let's thank everyone else who participated, including TCA members Jerry Johnson, Ray Sugg, Bob Lemberger, Wayne Sheriff, Steve Waller and, of course, Richard Keppel. A big thanks goes to our special guest from the Angels Gate High Railers, Matt Jackson.

We're planning to have a Kid's Meet on Saturday May 22, 2004. Mark your calendars! Contact Kid's Meet Committee Members Bob Caplan, Bob Lemberger, Dennis Taube or Harold Shapiro for more information.

